

Maxim Gorky Acquits the Russian Jews of Bolshevism

"There Are Many More Jews Among the Mensheviki Than There Are Among the Bolsheviks of Russia"

Since the death of Tolstoy Maxim Gorky has been called the "conscience of Russia." And as the conscience of Russia he continues to act. Governments come and governments go in that shifting country, but he continues to speak. And the burden of his appeals is this: that men do not live by politics alone.

A strange figure Gorky has been in Russian life since the beginning of the war. His fame as a novelist came suddenly and swiftly, and it declined just as rapidly. Since 1914 he has come to the front as Russia's great personality. He is a child of the Russian masses, yet he calls for justice and fair play for all men—proletarians and non-proletarians.

Gorky is respected alike by the revolutionists and the conservatives. He transcends party lines and party squabbles. In his paper, when he speaks at all, he speaks the voice not of the this or that party or faction, but the voice of Russia as he hears it.

The following are two editorials from his paper in Petrograd, "The New Life":

By Maxim Gorky

THE granting of equal rights to the Jews is one of the most beautiful achievements of our revolution. By putting the Jews on an equal basis with the Russians we have removed from our conscience a bloody brand of infamy. Nor does this conduct toward the Jews contain anything which would give us the right to self-pride. For the very reason that the Jews have struggled much more honestly and energetically for the freedom of Russia than many Russians and have supplied fewer renegades and agent provocateurs, we cannot and must not attempt to appear as "benefactors of the Jews," as many "kindly" and "soft-hearted" people do in their letters to me.

By permitting the Jews to come out from within the "pale" and to free themselves from the "dungeons of exclusion laws," we have given our country an opportunity to make use of the energy of people who know better how to work than we. It is universally known that we can now use men who love to work.

We have, therefore, no ground to feel proud of what we have done, but we should, on the contrary, rejoice that we have achieved a piece of work that is both practical and moral.

"We Are Absorbed in High Politics"

Still, there is little rejoicing to be seen anywhere. Possibly we have no time to rejoice; we are so absorbed in "high politics," which consists chiefly in chewing up the head of our neighbor. There is no rejoicing. On the contrary, anti-Semitism keeps growing. It lifts its ugly head and spreads the poisons of calumny and hatred all about.

But why all this (anti-Jewish agitation)? Why, think of it: among the anarchistically inclined Bolsheviks there are two Jews. Yes, I almost think there are three. Some even say that there are seven and are convinced that these seven Simeons (Samsons?) will pull down the temple which is inhabited by the 170,000,000 Russians.

If there was not so much baseness in it this spectacle could be called foolish, even comical.

The Hebrew God of revenge wished to spare an entire city because among a totally sinful population there was one virtuous person. And now, men who claim to be followers of the all-forgiving Redeemer believe that for the

sins of two or seven Jews the entire Jewish population should atone.

If this logic is to be followed out one ought to say that for the pure-Russian sinner, Lenin, all citizens of the province of Simbirsk, as well as the surrounding territory, should be made to suffer.

There are many more Jews among the Mensheviki than there are among the Bolsheviks. Yet my correspondents seem to ignore this fact, and keep on talking as if all Jews were anarchists.

This is a very unfortunate way of generalizing. I am convinced I know that the Jews as a mass—and this is astonishing—are showing much more sensible love to Russia than many Russians.

The majority of people do not notice this, although this is quite evident when one reads the articles written by Jewish journalists.

The "Riech," a newspaper which while one ought not to love one still must respect, has many Jews on its staff. Among the staff of the "Novoye Vremya" also there are Jews. And yet this paper only recently called the "Riech" a "Jew paper."

The writers on the "Riech" moreover show not the slightest sympathy for the Bolsheviks.

"Jew-Bolsheviki" A Foolish Formula

There are a thousand other evidences that the formula "Jew-Bolsheviki" is a very foolish formula, which is simply being put up to satisfy the zoologic instincts of excited Russians.

I will not cite proofs for it: decent people don't need these proofs, and the others will not be converted by them.

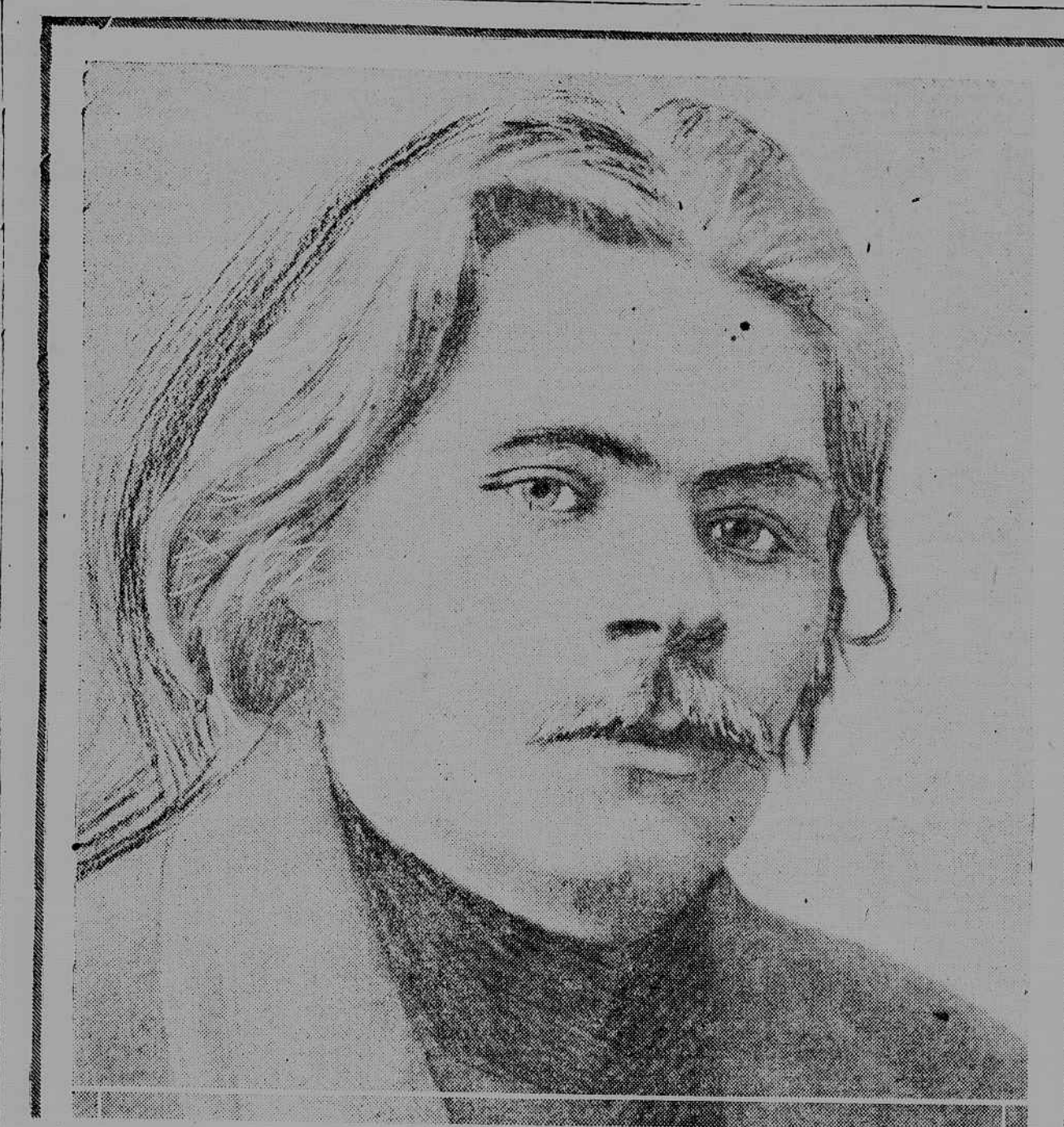
Idiocy is a disease that cannot be cured by suggestion. To those who suffer from this disease it is clear, since there are among Jews seven and one-half persons who are Bolsheviks, the Jewish population is guilty of everything.

Consequently, the decent and healthy Russian begins to feel once more anxiety and shame for his Russia and for the Russian thickheadedness which seeks the hated enemy for difficult problems with which life confronts it outside of itself instead of searching it in the depths of its own stupidity.

I hope that my numerous correspondents asking me about the "Jewish questions" will be satisfied with this answer.

And I add that for me the "question" as such does not exist.

I do not believe that the calumnious propaganda of the anti-Semites will be successful. I trust in the reason of the Russian people, in its conscience, in the



Maxim Gorky

Who has called himself "a voice in the wilderness."

sincerity with which it is striving after freedom, a sincerity which excludes the application of violence to any man. I believe that "everything passes and that only truth is permanent."

The New Anti-Semitism

I have received a large batch of anti-Semitic proclamations. They were sent to me by the "Central Committee of the Union of Christian Socialists." One of the proclamations is dated Moscow. Another is signed by the "Petrograd Section" of the above union. I do not know whether the above mentioned organization really exists. If it does exist then its members are neither Christians nor Socialists, but are of the ordinary variety of Russian people—those loose good-for-nothings and idlers who have only themselves to blame for their misfortunes, but who insist on making every one except themselves responsible for their uselessness and inability to order their lives.

That they are not Christians and still less Socialists is seen from the very low tone of their proclamation. Here are the introductory sentences:

"Anti-Semites of all countries, of all peoples, of all parties, unite!"

"The Union of Christian Socialists turns to all Russian citizens with the appeal to clear themselves of the Jewish pestilence with which our entire country is contaminated to the very depths of the population. Especially hard hit by this pest are our intellectual classes, which have been educated by the Jewish press, which is preaching the lying doctrines of brotherhood and equality of all nations and races. Every sensible man knows, however, that there is no equality and brotherhood nor will there be. As a consequence an equal relationship to all men and to all nationalities is impossible."

The Redeemer Never Made the Distinction

"Aren't they a fine lot to be the children of the loving Redeemer, who in his own life never made distinction between Jews and Greeks; who, as well as the first apostles, was a Jew and who suffered a martyr's death for men in general, for men of all races and origins! Yes, and what splendid Socialists they must be to speak of the doctrine of equality as 'lying' and a 'Jewish pest'."

Foolish, miserable, unfortunate people! By asserting that Russian citizens

without exception are infected by the Jewish pestilence, that is, by the doctrines of brotherhood and equality of all nations and races—the holy principles preached by nearly all religions and championed by the great thinkers of all ages and all countries—the authors of this proclamation arouse an all too flattering but unfortunately false conception of the Russian citizens. To cite but a single example: The citizen members of the "Union of Christian Socialists" are not only not contaminated by the lofty principles of equality, but like the majority of Russian citizens they have not the slightest conception of the universal cultural values of these principles.

Further along in this proclamation we read:

"The Aryan race physically as well as in its moral aspects represents a positive type of the highest scale of civilization; the Jewish race represents a negative type. When our intellectuals, the salt of the Russian soil, once perceive this they will make an end to these cheap phrases about the equal worth of the Jew and of the necessity of treating these pariahs of the human race on a basis of equality with other races."

"Every Family Has Its Cripples, But a People Does Not Consist of Cripples Alone" Says the Author

Let us think a moment: We must not treat them like the other nationalities on a basis of equality! Who are these "other nationalities"? Perhaps the Germans are meant, these members of the Aryan race who represent a morally positive type, which, however, did not prevent them from shooting great masses of Russian peasants as well as Jews. Or perhaps the mild Slavs are meant, the Russians, who are today killing one another with senseless brutality.

The seeming ignorance of these "Christian Socialists" is not convincing; it seems more like a mask.

The Petrograd proclamation is addressed "to the workers, soldiers and peasants" and is quite obviously aimed to appeal to the feelings and mode of thinking of the darkest masses.

In this second proclamation the question is being put:

"Have you seen many Jewish blacksmiths, house mechanics, agriculturists, washerwomen, cooks, servant girls? Have you ever seen the Jews standing in the streets of our cities begging? No!"

Of course one has never seen a Jew house mechanic in Petrograd or Moscow because this calling is under the direct control of the police, and the Jews for quite conceivable reasons were not permitted in such jobs. In Odessa, however, most of the truckmen are Jews. Of the Jews living in the pale 92 per cent are laborers and beggars.

Why There Are No Beggars Among the Jews

It is true that outside of the pale there are no Jewish beggars. This is due to the wonderful organization of the social self-help system among the Jews, as well as to the fact that the police arrest a Jewish beggar on sight. I think, too, that the scarcity of Jewish beggars in such territories is due to the fact that the kindly Greek orthodox Christians give the Jewish beggar a stone, or press a snake into his hand instead of a piece of bread. How the whole thing is woven over with lies, how revolting is the anti-Semitism of these foul jades!

When one reads such screeds of hate with all their petty venoms and their base slanders a feeling of shame and of fear seizes one for our Russia, for the land of Tolstoy, who has created the most humane literature the world has ever known.

The third proclamation presents an even more foolish invention of some agent provocateur.

This proclamation is headed:

"Very secret. To the chairmen of the local groups of the Israelite World Union." The "chairman" is thereupon urged to exercise the greatest caution. "We must carry out our aims with perseverance and strength; we must destroy strange altars and thrones." "We must bend Russia to her knees." "We must do everything for the greater glory of the great Jewish people," but without haste and with the greatest "caution."

When will all these idiots cease with their stupidities? Had they but care-

fully thought the matter out they would have seen that such an important round robin message as the one to the chairman of the "Israelite World Union" would have been written in the Jewish and not in the Russian language. If they had at least thought to add to their text, "Translated from the Jewish!"

How frightfully stupid!

Others That Are as Stupid as the Rest

The other proclamations are no less stupid than those quoted.

I have on several occasions told the anti-Semites that certain Jews have more advantageous and better paying positions in life, because they know how to work, because they love to be active and do their work with ecstasy. The Jew is almost always a better workman than the Russian. One must not be disappointed, but one simply must learn from him. This holds true whether in the field of personal endeavor or social endeavor—the Jew does his work with much greater temperament than the talkative Russian. Whatever nonsense the anti-Semites say, the fact remains that all their hatred for the Jew is attributable only to this, that in many ways the Jew is better, cleverer and more industrious than they. To-day when we have realized to what a terrifying extent the monarchy has left us enervated, sick and spiritually castrated, we must prize all able workers, the men of initiative who are in love with their work. Instead, however, we growl:

"Kill them because they are better than we."

This is the real ground for all your talk, Messrs. Anti-Semites, no matter how you may try to cover up (your motives).

Every Family Has Cripples on Its Hearth

These anti-Semitic proclamations concern themselves chiefly, of course, with such Jews as the Bolsheviks, Zinoviev and Volodarski—Jews who refuse to see that their tactlessness and foolishness supply rich material for an indictment of all Jews. Every family has its cripples. But a people does not consist of cripples only and there are surely thousands of Jews who hate such persons as Volodarski no less than the anti-Semites hate him. Of course this is not going to convince the anti-Semites that not all Jews are alike and that the class struggle among the Jews is no less acute than it is among other nations. That will not convince them, because they wish to be convinced of the opposite.

Perhaps, however, those who, like dogs, are being incited against the Jews (the masses) who are being urged to execute pogroms, perhaps they will object. Perhaps the people will call the authors of these proclamations to account and will tell them:

"Hands off! We are the masters of the land! We have fought for our freedom with aboveboard standards and will not permit glib-tongued swindlers to direct our will and senses. Hands off!"

New Light on the Part Played by President Wilson at Paris

By Frank H. Simonds

EVERY circumstance of the President's foreign mission has in recent months been subject to so much controversial comment that it is difficult in the extreme to discuss this visit without seeming to join in the controversy. Yet it is patent that there was a fact, that there were many facts, about the stay of Mr. Wilson in the French capital which can be described as they existed without reference to the domestic political differences at home, just as misapprehensions exist at home which can be explained away without dealing with the main issues of partisan dispute.

For example, when I landed in New York the newspapers were filled with the terms of the preliminaries of peace, which had several weeks before been served upon the Germans, and the Republican half of the Senate was criticizing an apparently unsuccessful effort of the President to withhold these terms from it and from the American public. But the fact was that Mr. Wilson had tried frequently and earnestly to have these terms published. He had urged such publication from the very hour when they had been served upon the Germans, believing and declaring that the people of the world were entitled to know what the Germans knew as a matter of right.

Wilson Did Not Delay Peace Plans

But there is a much larger field of criticism of the President, which rests upon misapprehension. There seems to be a widespread belief in this country that the President by his incessant urgings of the league of nations actually delayed the progress of settlement of terms upon the material problems. This is totally incorrect. When Mr. Wilson reached Europe, in December, he did not find France and Britain

with programmes arranged or with policies agreed upon. On the contrary, neither country had framed a programme jointly or separately. Britain, under Lloyd George's impulsion, had gone through the throes of an election, which had consumed all the energies and attention of its statesmen; France was wrestling with the grim problems of reorganization—temporary, incident reorganization after four years and a half of invasion and devastation.

More than this, the President did not bring his league of nations plan to Europe and force it upon a reluctant or hostile conference. Before he had even reached Europe Great Britain had decided to champion this great experiment, and many British ministers had taken their turn at devising actual machinery, for the President had not gone beyond the vaguest conception of a world league.

French Had Framed No Peace Programme

If the French were frankly incredulous and openly critical, they were, on the other hand, totally unready with a programme for the peace conference, and their own plans were not disarranged by Mr. Wilson's purposes. At all times and under all circumstances the league of nations part of the business of the peace conference was in more advanced shape than the balance, nor was the attention of the conference diverted from actual peace making by this detail.

When the President reached Europe he received one of the most astonishing welcomes ever given to any public man in history, probably without precedent. He was hailed with enthusiasm by millions who saw in him the promise of a new age, without any clear notion in their own minds as to what this new and golden age was to be, but with a plain and poignant appreciation of what the world they lived in had been in recent years.

For a moment the President was the

most popular man in Europe. On the whole he lost nearly if not all of this popularity in the following months, but not all of the responsibility was his, although in the case of France it was largely personal. And the decline in popularity of Lloyd George and Clemenceau was at least proportionate.

The mood of the masses was something quite different from what has been asserted. These masses had fought the war through; they were dog-tired with the agonies and sufferings, they hated this recent war, they hated all wars, they wanted peace and the millennium, but they did not want to pay the price, if any price could contribute to the end desired.

Lost Their Sympathy By a Single Action

All this the President was to discover the moment he undertook to apply cold logic to the claims of the French, for example. Actually, he discovered it even before this, for within one month after he reached France he had lost French sympathy forever by a single action. All France, every French man and French woman demanded, expected, awaited, a Presidential visit to the devastated areas. France desired that Mr. Wilson should see her wounds, that he might better appraise German offenses and therefore deal with them more severely. Seeing what the Germans had done in all the industrial districts of the north, the French believed Mr. Wilson would be more readily accept French estimates of the bills Germany must pay.

On his part, however, the President promptly and firmly declined these invitations. He explained that he desired to act without passion and that if he saw Flanders and Artois he might "see red" where it was essential to see without emotion. The refusal marked the immediate end of Mr. Wilson's popularity in France. The breach was final and irrevocable. Thereafter he disappeared from the thoughts of the masses of the people; henceforth he was no

more than Orlando or Lloyd George, a visiting statesman.

The truth which certain glib commentators do not seem to appreciate yet is that Mr. Wilson never was master of the Paris conference, and exercised a steadily declining influence as the debate shifted from general questions, like the league of nations, to specific problems concerning Europeans directly. He came to Europe with a very clear idea in his own mind that by applying his fourteen points quite literally and following them up with a league of nations he could put world peace on a solid foundation. He discovered very promptly that his fourteen points were really no points at all, since they could be used effectively by both sides in any real controversy; he discovered that the millions who cheered the idea of permanent peace turned from him with cold hostility when he demanded of them sacrifices which to him seemed essential to obtaining such peace.

There came a time, then, when Mr. Wilson had to choose between doing the best he could and coming home and leaving Europe to fight it out. He is gravely criticized by so-called liberals for electing to remain in Europe, but in the main this criticism is accompanied by the assertion that had he actually started for home the governments which existed would have come crashing down and new governments would have replaced them and done as he advised. Here again is the familiar argument that Mr. Wilson was in fact master of the situation, if he choose to use his power, but the fact is quite different.

Might Have Caused Upheaval in France

If, for example, Mr. Wilson had quit France because he was displeased with the French demands in the matter of the Saar, it is conceivable that Clemenceau might have fallen, not because of the opposition of the mass of the French people to the Saar claims; quite the contrary; it

would have fallen because in the difficult months of the winter and early spring all conditions in France were extremely bad and the people who suffered from the inescapable consequences of the war held the Ministry responsible. But if Clemenceau had fallen then there would have been a prompt drift to the radical left, Bolshevism all over Europe would have received an instant stimulus and heaven knows that in that time it needed no stimulus.

Wreck these the President might have, in all the difficult months, when Bolshevism was marching westward and internal misery and anarchy growing out of the war were supplying fresh tinder for Bolshevistic fires. But more than this he could not do. His liberal critics assert that he might have drawn strength from the radicals of Europe, but they do not recognize, as he had to, that such strength was slight and that the men with whom he was debating terms would be turned out of office if they conceded all or most of what he was asking them to concede. It was always possible for Woodrow Wilson to become the Bolshevik leader in Europe; he had only to break with Lloyd George and with Clemenceau to replace Lenin and Trotsky, and unquestionably Bolshevism would have gained instead of declining in the following months.

Mr. Wilson's gravest mistake, in my judgment, lay in his original misapprehension of the real facts. He thought, he believed, that there would be a peace of conciliation; he believed the mass of the plain people of the world were prepared to make any sacrifice to bring this about, and he believed that the fourteen points and the league of nations would take care of everything. Not only did he believe it, but he proclaimed the fact, and many people who heard him also believed it. Then, when it became perfectly clear that Europe was still Europe and that no American solution, based largely on a mixture of sublime faith and appalling unfamiliarity with the underlying facts, could or would be permitted to solve anything, he was attacked on all sides by

those who had accepted his original statements.

Believed He Could Settle Questions

Mr. Wilson encouraged the idea that he could go to Europe and solve this problem, settle all these questions. He undoubtedly believed this, and many of his followers believed it, also. Once in Europe, he found that all he could possibly accomplish was to get the best possible organization of the league of nations and hope that out of it would develop a method for avoiding wars. But if the President is being attacked by one wing for having failed, for having stayed in Europe instead of quitting and coming home, thus bringing about a general crash, it seems to me he deserves the approval in this respect of all thoughtful men and women who do not believe that even Bolshevism from one end of Europe to the other, with possible spilling over into America, was a small price to pay for putting certain liberal or so-called liberal ideas into effect.

If Mr. Wilson, when he found Clemenceau and Lloyd George could not follow his ideas without falling, had quit Europe I firmly believe that there would have been Bolshevistic explosions from the Channel eastward and perhaps in Britain, Germany might yet have won the war and France, Italy, Europe, have been ruined.

Won Friendship Of Clemenceau

Facing the dilemma, the President stayed and made such fight as he could for his programme. Clemenceau told a labor delegation just before I left Paris that he did not believe any one could have made a better fight, and odd circumstance—Clemenceau, who began by sneering openly at the President, has ended by feeling for him a considerable measure of respect and liking. I have heard more than one Frenchman of real weight say that in the end

France would be glad that the President had come to the peace conference, because his had been a usefully moderating influence.

Criticism Mr. Wilson as one may, it is still necessary to recognize that at a task, which to be sure was self-chosen, he worked with an energy and fidelity beyond question. He was at it night and day. His was, in a sense, a pathetic figure. Popularly, such as had come to him in the first hours of his stay, disappeared; he was remote, he had not the capacity for making friends and he had an infinite capacity for being misunderstood. Paris by turns laughed at him and passionately criticised him, misinterpreting his adhesion to academic notions as in fact actual championship of Germany.

In the end, the treaty terms which were made amounted to a recognition of the reasonable and the rejection of the extreme claims of all the nations at war with Germany, so far as Germany was concerned. Had the President had his way they would have been milder, had he not been at the peace conference I am certain they would have been more severe. But they were European terms pure and simple, as they were always bound to be. The President had not dominated the conference. He could not dominate it. He had found himself in the presence of an unyielding opposition when he threatened to go home, if his associates did not yield. He then declined the opportunity to turn the world over to Bolshevism because he could not have his own way, and for this he is now being assailed by American parlor Bolshevism, which begins and ends with the assertion that Mr. Wilson could have had his own way and that he is to be blamed, therefore, for not producing that millennium. To be sure he more or less promised this thing, but it was impossible at all times for reasons which are themselves the explanation of a thousand years and more of European and for that matter human history.

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